



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/594,844

09/28/2006

Akira Ohuchi

Q97404

3674

23373 7590 10/27/2009
SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
2100 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W.
SUITE 800
WASHINGTON, DC 20037

EXAMINER

HARRISTON, WILLIAM A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2826

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

10/27/2009

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/594,844	Applicant(s) OHUCHI ET AL.	
	Examiner WILLIAM HARRISTON	Art Unit 2826	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 September 2009.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,4,6 and 8-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,4,6 and 8-16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 28 September 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>9/28/2006</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 9/8/2009 has been entered.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments filed 9/8/2009 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

3. It is argued that the Qi reference (Qi et al. US 6774497) does not disclose or suggest a device wherein "the volume of said bumps is less than the volume of said apertures" as claimed by the applicant. This argument is found non-persuasive.

Qi gives an exemplary embodiment of a flip chip assembly at column 7 lines 14-32. In this embodiment Qi discloses round bumps 220 having a radius of 3.15 mils and a connective bump height of 4.5 mils. Qi discloses at column 7 lines 4-6 that a solder mask (250 in figure 2b) may have a height of 80% of a connective bump height. In this embodiment the height of the solder mask would equal 3.6 mils. Qi discloses at column 6 lines 64-65 that a solder mask may be formed separated from the pads on the substrate. Further, at column 7 lines 30 -32, Qi discloses that the bumped flip chip (210 in figure 2b) may be retained in its placed position by virtue of the connective bumps

Art Unit: 2826

(220 in figure 2b) being placed in the relatively deep pockets (apertures) in the solder mask. Examiner has interpreted this to require that the aperture in the solder mask have a minimum width so that a solder ball having a radius may be retained. In this embodiment an aperture must have a minimum width of 6.30 mils to accommodate a solder ball having a radius of 3.15 mils.

Based on the above disclosure we now know the radius of the bumps, the height of the apertures, and the minimum width of the apertures. It is well known in the art that the volume of a sphere is:

$$V = 4/3\pi r^3$$

In this embodiment the volume of the spherical connective bumps 220 would be:

$$\text{Volume of connective bump} = 4/3(3.14)(3.15 \times 3.15 \times 3.15) = \mathbf{122.9 \text{ mils}^3}$$

Qi discloses the apertures in the solder mask correspond to the pads (242 in figure 2b) on the electrical substrate. Qi does not disclose what shape the apertures take and does not exclude the apertures from taking a variety of geometric shapes.

In particular, Qi does not exclude an aperture having a square shaped opening and a generally cubic shape. The volume of the aperture having a cubic shape would be calculated using the formula to calculate the volume of a cube:

$$V = lwh$$

In this embodiment the volume of the cube shaped aperture would be:

$$\text{Volume of aperture} = (6.3 \text{ mils}) \times (6.3 \text{ mils}) \times (3.6 \text{ mils}) = \mathbf{142.9 \text{ mils}^3}$$

Based on the above it has been shown that Qi discloses an instance wherein the volume of a bump is less than the volume of an aperture. The claims as written do not preclude an instance wherein an aperture has a square shaped opening

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

5. Claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 9 and 11-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Qi US 6774497 taken with Fujimori US 20040046252 A1.

6. Regarding claim 1, Qi disclose a semiconductor device (200 in figure 2b) comprising:

a wiring board (240 in figure 2b) in which electrode pads (242 in figure 2b) are formed on the surface thereof;

a semiconductor element (210 in figure 2b) which is disposed on the wiring board and in which electrodes (214 in figure 2b) are formed on the surface thereof;

bumps (220 in figure 2b) for connecting said electrodes (214 in figure 2b) to said electrode pads (242 in figure 2b);

said bumps (220 in figure 2b) being formed from solder (see column 6 lines 12-14 of Qi); and

an underfill material (230 in figure 2b) filled between said wiring board (240 in figure 2b) and said semiconductor element (210 in figure 2b) to embed said bumps (220 in figure 2b), wherein said wiring board comprises a solder resist (250 in figure 2b) disposed on the surface of the side on which said electrode pads (242 in figure 2b) are formed;

wherein apertures for exposing said electrode pads (242) are formed on the solder resist (Examiner has interpreted “apertures” to be openings formed in the solder resist layer, this feature is disclosed at column 6, line 49-51) and the thickness of said solder resist in the area excluding the area directly above said electrode pads is equal to or greater than the thickness of said underfill resin disposed on said solder resist in said area between said wiring board a said semiconductor element (see column 7 lines 1-6). Qi further discloses wherein the volume of said bumps (220 in figure 2b) is greater than the volume of said apertures. See Response to Arguments above.

Qi does not disclose the underfill material is resin.

However, Fujimori does disclose a resin underfill material (173 in figure 43). It would have been obvious to one having skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Fujimori with the teachings of Qi because forming an under fill material from resin would reduce heat induced deformation between a semiconductor element and a wiring board, which would improves the reliability of connections. Further, since the gap between the semiconductor element and the wiring

Art Unit: 2826

board is sealed by resin, corrosion can be prevented by keeping moisture away from the solder balls and electrodes.

7. Regarding claim 2, Qi taken with Fujimori disclose the device of claim 1 for the reasons stated above. Qi further disclose the device wherein the thickness of said underfill resin disposed on said solder resist is 50 micrometers or less. See Qi column 7, lines 1-6. Qi discloses the underfill material may have a thickness of 20% of the connective bump height. The connective bump height of Qi is 4.5 mils, See column 7 lines 17-20. Therefore the underfill material will have a thickness of 0.9 mils. $0.9 \text{ mils} = 22.9 \text{ micrometers..}$

8. Regarding claim 4, Qi taken with Fujimori disclose the device of claim 3 for the reasons stated above. Qi further disclose the device wherein the thickness of said solder resist (250) is 30 micrometers or more. See Qi column 7, lines 1-6. Qi discloses the solder resist (250 in figure 2b) may have a thickness of 80% of the connective bump height. The connective bump height of Qi is 4.5 mils, See column 7 lines 17-20. Therefore the solder resist will have a thickness of 3.6 mils. $3.6 \text{ mils} = 91.5 \text{ micrometers..}$

9. Regarding claim 6, Qi discloses a method for manufacturing a semiconductor device, said method comprising the steps of:

forming bumps (120 in figure 1) on at least said electrode pads (114 in figure 1);
depositing an underfill material (130 in figure 1) on at least a portion of the area in which said semiconductor element (110 in figure 1) is to be mounted on said wiring board (240 in figure 2a);

pressing said semiconductor element to said wiring board to connect said electrode pads, said bumps, and said electrodes to each other; (see column 7 lines 41-46)

melting and then solidifying said bumps to join said electrodes to said electrode pads by way of said bumps; see column 7 lines 41-46) and

curing said resin material and forming an underfill resin so that said bumps become embedded between said wiring board and said semiconductor element; (see column 8 lines 4-8)

wherein the distance between said wiring board and said semiconductor element is controlled during the melting of said bumps in said joining step; (see column 8 lines 30-33)

and the thickness of said solder resist in the area excluding the area directly above said electrode pads is equal to or greater than the thickness of said underfill material disposed on said solder resist in said area between said wiring board and said semiconductor element after said underfill material has been formed. (see column 7 lines 1-6). Qi further discloses wherein the volume of said bumps (220 in figure 2b) is less than the volume of said apertures in the step of forming said bumps. See Response to Arguments above.

Qi does not disclose the underfill material is resin.

However, Fujimori does disclose a resin underfill material (173 in figure 43). It would have been obvious to one having skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Fujimori with the teachings of Qi because forming an

Art Unit: 2826

under fill material from resin would reduce heat induced deformation between a semiconductor element and a wiring board, which would improve the reliability of connections. Further, since the gap between the semiconductor element and the wiring board is sealed by resin, corrosion can be prevented by keeping moisture away from the solder balls and electrodes.

10. Regarding claim 8, Qi taken with Fujimori disclose the method of claim 6 for the reasons stated above. Qi further discloses the method wherein the thickness of said underfill resin disposed on said solder resist is 50 micrometers or less. See Qi column 7, lines 1-6. Qi discloses the underfill material may have a thickness of 20% of the connective bump height. The connective bump height of Qi is 4.5 mils, See column 7 lines 17-20. Therefore the underfill material will have a thickness of 0.9 mils. $0.9 \text{ mils} = 22.9 \text{ micrometers}.$

11. Regarding claim 9, Qi taken with Fujimori disclose the method of claim 6 for the reasons stated above. Qi further discloses the method wherein the distance between said wiring board and semiconductor element is controlled by controlling the relative position of said semiconductor element with respect to said wiring board in said joining step. See column 7.

12. Regarding claim 11, Qi taken with Fujimori disclose the method of claim 6 for the reasons stated above. Qi further discloses an underfill material to which a chemical capable of removing an oxide film is added is used as an underfill material. See column 7, line 52- column 8.

Qi does not disclose the underfill material is resin. However, Fujimori does

Art Unit: 2826

disclose a resin underfill material (173 in figure 43 of Fujimori). It would have been obvious to one having skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Qi with the teachings of Fujimori because forming an under fill material from resin would reduce heat induced deformation between a semiconductor element and a wiring board which improves the reliability of connections. Further, since the gap between the semiconductor element and the wiring board is sealed by resin, corrosion can be prevented by keeping moisture away from the solder balls and electrodes.

13. Regarding claim 12, Qi taken with Fujimori disclose the device of claim 6 for the reasons stated above. Qi taken with Fujimori no dot disclose the step of carrying out a plasma treatment. However, plasma treatment is well known in the art for growing largely crystalline oxide coating, which present high hardness and a continuous barrier, on metals. One of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to perform a plasma treatment for the purpose of offering protection against wear, corrosion, and heat.

14. Regarding claims 13 and 15, Qi taken with Fujimori disclose the device of claim 1 and the method of claim 6 for the reasons stated above. Qi further discloses wherein the thickness of the solder resist (250 in figure 2b) is about 30 micrometers. See Qi column 7, lines 1-6. Qi discloses the solder resist (250 in figure 2b) may have a thickness of 40% of the connective bump height. The connective bump height of Qi is 4.5 mils, See column 7 lines 17-20. Therefore the solder resist will have a thickness of 1.8 mils. $3.6 \text{ mils} = 45.7 \text{ micrometers}$. The claim does not preclude a solder resist having a thickness of 45.7 micrometers

15. Regarding claims 14 and 16, Qi taken with Fujimori disclose the device of claim 1 and the method of claim 6 for the reasons stated above. Qi further discloses wherein:

the thickness of the solder resist (250 in figure 2b) in the area excluding the area directly above the electrode pads is at least four times greater than the thickness of the underfill resin (230 in figure 2b) disposed on the solder resist in the area between the wiring board 240 and the semiconductor element 210. Qi column 7 lines 1-6 disclose the underfill material (230 in figure 2b) may have a thickness equal to 20% of the connective bump height. Qi further discloses the solder resist (250 in figure 2b) may have a thickness equal to 80% of the connective bump height.

Conclusion

16. This is a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) of applicant's earlier Application No. 10594844. All claims are drawn to the same invention claimed in the earlier application and could have been finally rejected on the grounds and art of record in the next Office action if they had been entered in the earlier application. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL** even though it is a first action in this case. See MPEP § 706.07(b). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any

Art Unit: 2826

extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no, however, event will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to WILLIAM HARRISTON whose telephone number is (571)270-3897. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 9 AM to 5 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Sue A. Purvis can be reached on (571)272-1236. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/W. H./

Examiner, Art Unit 2826

/Leonardo Andújar/

Application/Control Number: 10/594,844

Page 12

Art Unit: 2826

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2826